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SUBJECT: EC ON UN: A COMMITMENT TO "MILITANT
MULTILATERALISM"

REF: A. A) BRUSSELS 4143

[B. B\)](#) BRUSSELS 3263

[C. C\)](#) BRUSSELS 3210

Classified By: USEU POLOFF TODD HUIZINGA, FOR REASONS 1.5 (B) AND (D)

[1](#)1. (C) SUMMARY: On September 10, the EC issued a policy paper on the "European Union and the United Nations: The Choice of Multilateralism." The paper is meant to "catalyze" debate within the EU, and to dovetail with the European Security Strategy (reftels) now being developed. Full of genuflection to "global governance" and projects such as the International Criminal Court (ICC) and the Kyoto Protocol, the EC paper advocates what it terms "militant multilateralism." EC officials confirm that one of the Commission's ultimate, but long-term, objectives is to become a full, voting member of all UN bodies that handle issues over which the Commission has jurisdiction within the EU. We see little new in the paper that would have immediate effect on U.S. interests, although it confirms European support for a concept of multilateralism that could ultimately be a hindrance to the pursuit of U.S. foreign-policy interests if the UN system fails to act. END SUMMARY.

MULTILATERALISM IS THE KEY

[1](#)2. (U) On September 12, Poloff met with three officials from the European Commission's External Relations Directorate-General, Office of UN Affairs: Willy Kempel, Klas Nyman and Thomas Huyghebaert, to discuss the Commission's Policy Paper, or "Communication." These officials affirmed that the purpose of the paper was twofold: not only to enhance the EU's role in the United Nations, but also to strengthen the UN and thereby the "multilateral system." They pointed to passages to that effect from the paper's introduction: "The European Union's commitment to multilateralism is a defining principle of its external policy.... The EU has a clear interest in supporting the continuous evolution and improvement of the tools of global governance.... Europe's attachment to multilateralism - and to the United Nations, as the pivot of the multilateral system - will help determine whether, and how, the institutional architecture (of multilateralism)...can continue to serve as the bedrock of the international system.... An active commitment to an effective multilateralism means...promoting a forward-looking agenda that is not limited to a narrow defense of national interests."

PAPER REFLECTS EU CONSENSUS

[1](#)3. (C) Although the prerogative of formulating the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) lies with the member states and the Council -- not with the Commission -- our interlocutors predicted that the member states would not criticize the Commission for overstepping the bounds of its authority in this paper. The ideas expressed, they said, reflect a widely held consensus in the EU on the importance of the UN, the multilateralist approach, and of the EU's role in strengthening multilateral institutions. They said that member states had not been consulted during the more than year-long process of drafting the paper, but added that, by definition, a Commission Communication is an internal Commission paper. Member states, they said, are never consulted during the drafting of a communication.

PAPER MEANT TO SPARK DEBATE...

[1](#)4. (C) The ideas in the paper are meant to stimulate debate, not to be the final word, according to our Commission interlocutors. Now that the communication has been released, they said, the Commission wants the member states and the European Parliament to bring their views into the mix. Our interlocutors said various EU working groups (which are made up of member-state and Commission officials and meet monthly to provide input on foreign-policy issues) would discuss the

paper and provide input in the period from October to December. Then, they said, EU Foreign Ministers or heads of government were expected to release formal conclusions at the end of the Italian EU presidency in December.

AND FEED INTO ESS PROCESS

15. (C) Our interlocutors added that the paper is also meant to support the European Security Strategy (ESS), which is currently being drafted and may be approved at the EU Summit capping the Italian EU Presidency in December. They noted that one of the three strategic objectives of the ESS is "building an international order based on effective multilateralism." This policy paper, they said, contains the Commission's thoughts on how to build that order.

GOOD OR BAD NEWS FOR U.S.?

16. (C) Some of the language in the paper gives rise to concern regarding its possible ramifications for U.S. interests in the UN. The promotion of the Kyoto Protocol and the creation of the International Criminal Court (ICC), for example, are highlighted as examples of important EU accomplishments in the multilateral system, and the paper claims to aim at adoption of a "militant multilateral poise" for the EU. The paper states that "the role of the UN and in particular the UNSC as a final arbiter on the consequences of non-compliance as foreseen in multilateral regimes - needs to be effectively strengthened." In this sense, the Commission paper is somewhat in conflict with the ESS drafted by Solana's staff in the Council. The latter document suggests there may be times when action is needed when the UN fails to face up to a problem. The Commission's document, which is replete with loosely defined terms such as "global governance," implies a greater commitment to action only through the UN system -- and may define more correctly the prevailing view among EU member states.

17. (C) Our contacts asserted that the paper should be good news for the U.S. They said that the paper aimed at: (1) an effective, efficient UN, which would be good for all of the UN's members; (2) a unified EU voice in the UN, which would make the EU a more reliable and efficient partner of the U.S.; and (3) early and transparent coordination with the EU's partners in the UN (above all, with the U.S., they said) on key issues. They said that, in order for the strategy to work, the EU would have to be zealous at getting U.S. ideas early on and bringing them into EU deliberations.

ADDITIONALITY LONG-TERM EC GOAL

18. (C) The paper also refers to the desirability of pursuing full EC membership in UN-system agencies dealing with areas for which the EC has responsibilities within the EU (such as the FAO and the Codex Alimentarius, in which the EC, respectively, has or soon will have full membership). Our contacts responded that "the long-term objective" was to achieve full voting membership for the Commission in all such UN agencies, apart from the question of whether EU member states would also retain voting membership in the same agencies. They hastened to add, however, that additional voting rights for the Commission were not a principal near-term objective of Commission UN policy.

19. (C) COMMENT: We do not expect this policy paper to have much effect in the near term. The ideas and recommendations in the paper reflect a well-known consensus within the EU on the importance of the UN and the multilateral approach, and the desire within the EU to strengthen the EU's role in the UN. Member-state views on the specifics of the paper are not yet clear, but we suspect it will receive broad support. What the paper illustrates is that an important EU institution, the European Commission, is committed to a multilateralist approach that often tends to assert UN primacy over "narrow" national interests or unilateral (read "U.S.") actions. Also, the Communication's timing to coincide with the EU debate on the ESS may bolster the aspect of the ESS that, while coming to an assessment of global security threats similar to that of the USG and stressing the importance of the transatlantic alliance, pays homage to a concept of "international order based on...multilateralism" that many in the EU have interpreted as an effort to broaden and strengthen binding international agreements, such as Kyoto and the ICC. The EC desire to enhance its status in certain UN organizations is one we need to follow closely. There may be organizations where EC funding is crucial to achieving our objectives (UNHCR comes to mind) in which a status above simple observer might be in our interest, but in other organizations a stronger EC role would be inappropriate -- and even harm our ability to work bilaterally with one or

more EU member states to achieve our objectives. END
COMMENT.

FOSTER